



April 5, 2021

Contents

| | |
|---|----------|
| Employee Spotlight..... | 1 |
| Ellen Powell – Well Done!..... | 1 |
| News You Can Use | 2 |
| Emerald Ash Borer Cost-Share Program..... | 2 |
| SPCC Cardholder & Supervisor Training | 2 |
| Project Updates | 2 |
| Policy and Procedures | 2 |
| Dry Hydrant Program..... | 2 |
| Urban Wood Project | 3 |
| Last Week..... | 3 |
| State Forester | 3 |
| Human Resources | 4 |
| Forestland Conservation..... | 5 |
| Forest Resource Management | 5 |
| Agency Lands | 5 |
| State-Owned Lands..... | 6 |
| Eastern Region | 6 |
| Central Region | 7 |
| Public Information | 7 |
| News Clips..... | 7 |

Employee Spotlight

Ellen Powell – Well Done!

- ◆ Ida Swenson of the Rivanna Chapter of Master Naturalists shared the following message with Ellen Powell (conservation education specialist).
 - “I think you are one of the very few original speakers since our first class in 2006, but the quality of your teaching reflects well on us who are trying to organize the classes. Thank you for prevailing in spite of the adjustment to zoom versus in person teaching. Your use of the Elmo was really appreciated, but you can see that in the attached evaluation summary. Another hit!!
Thanks again!!!”

News You Can Use

Emerald Ash Borer Cost-Share Program

- ◆ The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Cost-Share Program will begin accepting applications starting April 12 through June 10 for qualified applicants. This year, organizations statewide and landowners in the VDOF eastern region, with ash greater than 12 inches diameter at breast height (DBH) and 30 percent or less canopy dieback, are eligible for assistance. Interested applicants should obtain a treatment quote from their arborist of choice and have a VDOF forester assess the trees prior to treatment in order to be considered for the program. Approved applications will be reimbursed up to 50 percent of direct treatment costs conducted by a Virginia Department of Agricultural Consumer Services (VDACS) state-certified pesticide applicator, not to exceed \$7.50 per DBH inch or \$1,250 in cost-share payments per landowner or \$5,000 in cost-share payments per organization. Applications ([Form 6.5](#)) should be submitted to Teagan O'Brien (forest health technician), at Headquarters. More information can be found on the [website](#), and all details are listed in [Policy and Procedure 6-2 Emerald Ash Borer Cost-Share Program](#).

SPCC Cardholder & Supervisor Training

- ◆ SPCC training is now available in the Learning Center: <https://covlc.virginia.gov/>. All training and certifications are mandatory and due no later than **April 30, 2021**.
- ◆ To access, search on keyword SPCC 2021 (exact phrase) in the course catalog and select:
 - DOA - Cardholder Supervisor Reviewer Training 2021
 - DOA - SPCC Cardholder Training 2021
- ◆ If you need assistance logging into the Learning Center, please contact Kristi Clore at 434.220.3329 or Kristi.clore@dof.virginia.gov. (Note: Google Chrome is the recommended browser for all trainings. Users who only have Internet Explorer will need to Delete Browsing History/Cookies and Turn OFF Compatibility View.)

Project Updates

Policy and Procedures

- ◆ The [VDOF Policy and Procedure 1-2 Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\) and Responding to Requests of Records](#) has recently been updated to reflect current state FOIA policy and law. Ed Zimmer remains the agency FOIA officer and initial point of contact for any questions regarding FOIA requests.
 - Please make it a point to review the revised policy to ensure you have a basic understanding of what is and is not a FOIA request, what is generally excluded from a FOIA request and the timeframes for responding to a FOIA request.
- ◆ [VDOF Policy and Procedures 10-1 Open Space Easement Development](#) and [10-2 Open Space Easement Monitoring](#) have been updated to reflect the new forestland conservation coordinator position.

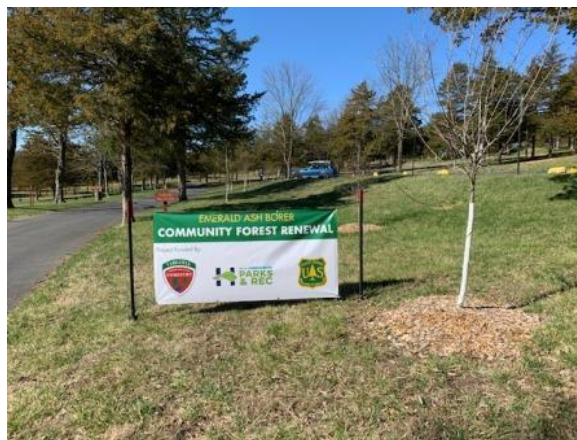
Dry Hydrant Program

- ◆ We now have two newly selected contractors to complete the work of the dry hydrant program. New requests for assistance have been divided into three contract zones (which are not exactly in alignment with our regional boundaries). Zone 1 includes mostly the eastern counties, Zone 2 covers the middle part of the state, and Zone 3 covers the western counties.

- ◆ KCH Contracting will cover Zone 1 and Justin Showalter (RX Fire) will be installing and repairing dry hydrants in Zones 2 and 3. Grant applicants do have the option to complete the needed work themselves and be reimbursed based on guidance and established procedures. Fred Turck (prevention program manager) will be working closely with the applicants and the contractors as we move forward, and any questions should be directed to him.
- ◆ Finally, several personnel are recognized for their effort and support to complete this needed program change: Jessica Carroll (fiscal technician), Corey Richie (procurement officer), Sandy Mills (fire & water quality programs coordinator) and John Miller (director of fire and emergency response). If you have any questions, please reach out to [Fred Turck](#).

Urban Wood Project

- ◆ The Virginia Urban Wood Project recently concluded participation in the four-week, eight session, Natural Area Management Series Level-2 training webinars. These training sessions were developed to expand the base of service providers to serve the needs of small parcel landowners across the multi-state area. The average attendance for the webinars was 125 participants, with approximately 35 from Virginia and also from Georgia which is a partner state in the Urban Wood Grant.
- ◆ Recently, the Virginia Urban Wood Program coordinated the creation of an EAB-Community Forest Restoration banner (see photo below) for the City of Harrisonburg which is still in the process of removing and replacing over 700 ash trees impacted by EAB activity. Harrisonburg has already used this banner in two different city parks as an outreach tool. This was a collaborative project representing the, VA Urban Wood Project, Forest Health's EAB program, and U&CF's Remove & Replace program.



- ◆ The City of Harrisonburg, Virginia recently received the 2021 Gold Medal Governor's Environmental Excellence Award for their installation of an underground bioreactor that filters water through ash wood chips from city trees that were killed by the EAB. The VA Urban Wood Program served as a technical advisor for this project. The following press release provides more details about the project >> https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/sites/default/files/CMO/files/press_release/2021/03-29%20City%20Wins%202021%20Gold%20Medal%20Governors%20Environmental%20Excellence%20Award.pdf

Last Week

State Forester

- ◆ Rob Farrell and Terry Lasher (assistant state forester) met with Virginia Cooperative Extension and Virginia Tech College of Natural Resources to explore the potential of merging VDOF's InForest

ecosystem services tool with the college's PlantShoe program. Both of these web services are designed to enable landowners to evaluate their property for potential revenue sources other than traditional forest products. InForest enables users to determine the carbon, nutrient, and air quality impacts of land use changes on their property to support participation in ecosystem services markets. The PlantShoe Site Assessment Tool helps users to identify opportunities for conserving native Appalachian medicinal forest plants and where landowners would best be able to grow them as a forest crop. Both InForest and PlantShoe are in need of updating and a source of ongoing support.

- ◆ Rob Farrell held an initial meeting with the consulting forester that has been contracted by the US Endowment for Forestry and Communities to support the Mountain Valley Pipeline Forest Enhancement mitigation work. The contractor will work with land managers from the public agencies in western Virginia to identify projects and get mitigation work accomplished as well as testing VDOF's Hardwood Assessment Tool.
- ◆ Rob Farrell participated in the first meeting of the National Forest Legacy Capacity Leadership Team representing the southern state foresters. This group has been created to help identify improvements in the Forest Legacy program and processes to reduce the time it takes to spend Forest Legacy funds on property acquisitions and conservation easements. This is becoming critical now that The Great American Outdoors Act will result in double the historic level of funding for Forest Legacy projects.
- ◆ VDOF was again a key co-host of the 31st Environment Virginia Symposium, conducted by the Virginia Military Academy. Twelve members of VDOF's staff, including State Forester Rob Farrell attended the virtual conference, which included a panel keynoted by Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Bettina Ring.

Human Resources

- ◆ In alignment with our Human Capital Management Strategic Goal, our Human Resources (HR) team has championed many efforts since 2017, such as providing experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate students pursuing studies at two-year and four-year colleges/universities in our Commonwealth. Our efforts have focused on paid summer/winter internships.
- ◆ However, new in 2021, we will augment our experiential learning experience for graduate and postdoctoral students by becoming a host agency for the inaugural Commonwealth of Virginia Engineering and Science Fellowship (COVES) program. This new effort by the Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine (VASEM) selects COVES Fellows from a highly competitive pool of applicants in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields.
- ◆ The COVES Policy Fellowship is awarded to the candidates exhibiting a keen interest in improving the interface between science and political decision-making, and who wish to learn the public policy decision-making process in Virginia. VASEM is a coordinated effort between George Mason University, Old Dominion University, University of Virginia, Virginia State University, Virginia Tech, and the College of William & Mary; it provides a full stipend for the duration of the fellowship and incurs no financial obligation for VDOF.
- ◆ The fellowship is for 12-weeks and includes pre-planned professional development events throughout their hosted fellowship experience. VDOF plans to assign fellows under the Assistant State Forester, and coordinate efforts with our Forest Management Branch and Public Information Office from May 24, 2021 to August 9, 2021. Our goal is to lay the foundation for another opportunity to **attract, develop and sustain the agency workforce to carry out our mission.**
- ◆ During the month of March our HR team has supported numerous Virtual Career Fair events. Continuing to learn different virtual hiring platforms "on-the-go" to successfully create our web space or Virtual Booth is critical. Integral to our success has been Kristy Clore's solid understanding of

technology and her desire for personal and professional growth. As a result, our participation included the Virginia Tech Natural Resources Career Fair, the first ever state government Live, Love & Work in Virginia Career Fair and two veteran-centered career fairs at Joint Base Langley and Eustis. In all, we had over 300 visitors in our virtual booths and our staff engaged with at list 45 interested candidates. We will continue to support virtual hiring efforts with the hopes of a prompt return to face-to-face events.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ The fourth week of the Roanoke Webinar series featured speaker Bill Groce of the Virginia Department of Labor. Bill spoke to over 65 participants about safe use of vehicles and mobile equipment in arboriculture. His shared knowledge was informative and a reminder of the importance of best practices when performing tree work.
- ◆ Molly O'Liddy (urban & community forestry [U&CF] partnership coordinator) has been working with communities to determine Arbor Day celebration plans for 2021. The Arbor Day Foundation has waived the requirement for a celebration this year, however is requiring a signed proclamation. So far, about half of our communities have planned a celebration.
- ◆ Lara Johnson (U&CF program manager) completed the 2020 additions to the My Trees Count application to help track urban tree planting projects for the Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) goals. The update can be found here <https://arcg.is/WryDG>.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ The Southern Research Station – Forest Inventory & Analysis work unit (SRS-FIA) has posted the Virginia 2019 FIA data online. The 2019 FIA standard tables are available on H drive in the FIA folder and through the EVALIDator application <https://apps.fs.usda.gov/Evalidator/evalidator.jsp>. For more information or assistance, contact the forest inventory manager, [John Pemberton](#).
- ◆ Virginia Cooperative Extension has published the 2021 edition of the Virginia Pest Management Guide. This guide lists recommended control methods for common tree pests and diseases in Virginia. The chapter on Horticultural and Forest Crops can be found here: <https://resources.ext.vt.edu/contentdetail?contentid=2376&contentname=2021%20Pest%20Management%20Guide%20-%20Horticultural%20and%20Forest%20Crops>
- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health manager) participated in the Northeast Midwest State Forester Alliance (NMSFA) virtual Forest Health Committee meeting. Lori is the liaison between this group and the Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF) Forest Health Committee. The group discussed themes that are common to both regions including national forest health budgets, impacts of climate change, and emerging pests.
- ◆ Teagan O'Brien (forest health specialist) attended an emerald ash borer webinar hosted by USDA Animal Health Plant Inspection Service (APHIS) about biological control. VDOF has released over 15,000 parasitoid wasps in Virginia as biological control of EAB, and we are searching for new sites to release more this year.

Agency Lands

- ◆ Garland Gray Forestry Center has lifted 87 percent of the seed beds and graded 92 percent of the crop.
- ◆ Ones Bitoki (tree improvement forester) bagged roughly 1,500 loblolly pine flowers for a North Carolina State Tree Improvement Program study of the specific combining abilities of pollinators utilized for our controlled pollination efforts.

- ◆ A team of volunteers from Headquarters staff and the Central and Western Regions completed the stratification of the pine seed for next year's VDOF nursery crop. The process involves carefully weighing the seed in 10-lb. increments, soaking them for 24 hours in 5-gallon buckets of water (pictured), and then draining and bagging them for a 30-day stratification period in the cooler at Augusta Forestry Center. In total, over 3,010 pounds of seed were treated that should yield over 34.6 million seedlings - mainly loblolly with lesser amounts of Virginia, shortleaf and Scotch pines. The total value of growing the seed plus the seedling crop that can potentially be produced from this effort is over \$3.6 million - ranging from \$10,000 to \$23,000 per 10-lb bucket stratified by these volunteers. That's some valuable seed - averaging nearly \$90 an ounce. The volunteers over the five-day week included Zach Arnold, Jonah Fielding, Cain Harbison, Daniel Hosack, Walker Wolff (area foresters), Josh Bennicoff (nursery manager), Jerre Creighton (research program manager), Katlin Dewitt (forest health specialist), Jake Good (nursery technician), Matthew Hutchins, Erin Perry, Ben Wassum (forest technicians), Todd Groh (forest resource management coordinator), Josh McLaughlin (assistant nursery manager), Patti Nylander (senior area forester) and Teagan O'Brien (forest health technician). Thanks to everyone for laying the foundation for next year's VDOF nursery crop and Virginia's 2022 planting season.
- ◆ Reforestation was completed on the Cumberland, Appomattox-Buckingham, Prince Edward - Gallion, Lesesne, Devil's Backbone, Dragon's Run, and Sandy Point State Forests on Sunday with shortleaf pine being planted on Devil's Backbone and Lesesne State Forests.
- ◆ Staff completed timber cruises for four different Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Natural Heritage Properties.
- ◆ The Greater Atlantic Rescue Dogs (GARD) Search and Rescue (SAR) Training along with the Virginia State Police Dog training was held at Sandy Point State Forest.



State-Owned Lands

- ◆ The Virginia Tech McCormick Farm Timber Sale on March 23 sold for \$57,690.
- ◆ Reforestation was completed on the Patrick Henry Corrections State-Owned Lands Project with 29 acres being planted to Loblolly Pine this past Thursday.
- ◆ Planting on the Richard Bland College State-Owned Lands Project (159 acres) started Monday, March 29 with expectations to complete by March 31.

Eastern Region

- ◆ Jeremy Falkenau (senior area forester) represented VDOF during a Virginia Tech College of Natural Resources and Environment (CNRE) webinar titled "Engaging the Public." Other webinar speakers included fellow Hokie CNRE alumni Ethan Crocket (Bartlett Tree Experts) and James McCabe (Newport News Waterworks). During the webinar each presenter spoke about their particular career's pathway and how important public engagement is to the broad field of natural resource management. The webinar was attended by 10 students with a broader audience expected once the recording is posted. This webinar was part of CNRE's Careers in Natural Resources Webinar Series
- ◆ Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forester) attended the Wetland Watch's final Adaptive Land Management Strategies Work Group meeting. Wetlands Watch is looking to build resilience in the coastal communities by restoring natural features. In Chesapeake, they are doing this through Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) acquisitions that have been handed over to land trusts (the Living River Land Trust in this case). In Norfolk, they are doing this through changes to zoning. They are

looking for the work group to vet actions and strategies as well as evaluation methods. Strategies they are considering include: pocket parks, community gardens, sports fields, pollinator meadows, restoration/green infrastructure, and education. Meghan also discussed opportunities to partner with Chesapeake in turning this plan into a reality.

Central Region

- ◆ Bill Perry (forester specialist), Kyle Manning (forest technician), Martha Warring (senior area forester) and Deya Ramsden (middle James River forest watershed project coordinator) assisted the City of Lynchburg with planting approximately 50 trees and installing tubes and stakes for a project under the Middle James River Forested Watershed Program. The area was along the bank of Black Water Creek at Hollins Mill Park. The James River Heritage Trail runs through the park near the planting and Black Water Creek empties into the James River about 1.5 miles from the park. Sarah Hagan (former VDOF employee and current Lynchburg Urban Forester) spearheaded the planting. Other participants were with the city of Lynchburg and Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension.
- ◆ Jim McGlone (urban forest conservationist) taught the Loudoun Master Gardeners basic training pruning class. He compensated for the virtual format with pictures and videos he has taken over the past 12 years of pruning he has done in his yard and the results of that pruning on the plants.
- ◆ Jim McGlone attended the virtual meeting of the Washington Council of Governments Regional Canopy Subcommittee. The subcommittee is preparing canopy recommendations for the region and for different zoning and land use categories.
- ◆ Jordan Herring (senior area forester) led a virtual workshop on tree planting and maintenance for residents of Purcellville. The presentation touched on right tree, right place, how to correctly plant trees, and maintenance that is needed after planting.

Public Information

- ◆ Raina DeFonza (public information specialist) participated in the Virginia Forests editorial board meeting and will coordinate with VDOF staff on a number of articles including Reforestation Timberland (RT) and the Hardwood Forest Habitat Initiative (HFHI).
- ◆ Public Information is coordinating with U&CF to plant an eastern redbud tree on the Headquarters campus in honor of Page Hutchinson. The tree will be planted and dedicated for Arbor Day, April 30. The tree planting will be shared live on social media so that Page's many friends and colleagues can join in virtually.
- ◆ New *Field Notes* post: ["Field Notes: Spring Break for Salamanders"](#) and [Field Notes: The Early Shrub Gets the Sun](#)

News Clips

- ◆ [Herbal Essences Partners with The Nature Conservancy and TerraCycle® to Help Sow the Seeds of Sustainability and 'Renew the Forest'](#)
- ◆ [Church creates local oasis from dying urban forest](#)
- ◆ [Clintwood VFD: Charges pending after trash burn leads to brush fire in Dickenson County Sunday](#)
- ◆ [Department of Forestry, Virginia Cooperative Extension make legacy planning accessible](#)
- ◆ [Google to Make Major New Mass Timber Project Announcement at 2021 IMTC](#)
- ◆ [Biochar is a win-win for timber and ag](#)
- ◆ [Wood you believe it? Timber-topped addition to DC building underway](#)

- ◆ [These hole-riddled walls are like noise-canceling headphones for your office](#)
- ◆ [MET MONDAY: Why are ‘controlled burns’ needed?](#)
- ◆ [Amid spring fire season, some firefighters work to get more blazes burning](#)
- ◆ [‘Who doesn’t love to plant trees?’](#)
- ◆ [Wood Underwear® Planting Trees in Partnership with One Tree Planted](#)
- ◆ [US Forest Industry & Manufacturing Continue to Expand](#)
- ◆ [One thing COVID-19 has changed: Our relationship with paper](#)
- ◆ [How Ancient Forests Formed Coal and Fueled Life as We Know It](#)
- ◆ [Mass Timber: A Construction Revolution Rooted in Forests](#)
- ◆ [Turning wood into plastic](#)
- ◆ [Shenandoah National Park plans prescribed burn](#)
- ◆ [photographer vitor schietti captures dream-like forests of falling light](#)
- ◆ [Virginia high schoolers can attend this virtual natural resources camp](#)